

Cambridgeshire Development Forum (CDF) statement further to the Inspector's 'Further Matters, Issues and Questions' in relation to the Examination of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan- Single Issue Review

This statement is submitted to the Inspector in respect of the prospective virtual hearing session; it is further to the CDF submission made to the Inspector for the examination-in-public of the ECLP Single Issue Review.

The Forum has on several occasions debated the issues raised by the ECLP. This statement reflects a consensus of the views on these issues ; it should not be regarded as representing the view of any individual CDF member organisation.

Our principal conclusion and request is that the Inspector should not agree to amend the issue of the Plan period. The ECLP has a base date of 2011. To change the base date to 2022 in respect of housing provision has implications for the Plan as a whole. The ECLP needs, for example, to make sufficient provision for employment and retail sites over the whole plan period. The number of new homes within the area cannot be determined without regard to the implications for employment and other infrastructure.

It would clearly be preferable for there to be a review of the Plan. It is approaching eight years since the Plan was adopted. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that policies and plans should be reviewed at least every five years. This SIR does not permit the changes over the last decade to be taken into account nor does it provide a 15-year forward view of strategic policies from its date of adoption.

If, nonetheless, the plan review is limited to housing need, we urge the Inspector to determine that the housing requirement be based on the period 2011-2031 and that, as a consequence, that under-delivery between 2011 and 2022 should be included within the Plan's forward housing requirement. In respect of the period through to 2031, housing need should be assessed by reference to the standard method in national planning guidance, in accordance with the NPPF presently in force. There are no exceptional circumstances which would justify an alternative approach.

Accordingly, we submit that the housing requirement for the ECLP should be set at 11,725 homes and that a lower requirement would not be justified and would render the Plan unsound.

CDF/14/03/2023